

The ISSCR Annual Meeting Series

The ISSCR annual meeting series is a cornerstone of the society. The meeting provides a core forum for dissemination of ground-breaking research in all areas of stem cell science, with participants from academic, industry, and government settings world-wide.

In 2007, in collaboration with the Australian Stem Cell Centre, the 5th ISSCR Annual Meeting was held in Cairns, Australia, the first meeting to be held outside North America. Attendance was excellent, with 1922 registrants, and as hoped, the Asia/Pacific region was strongly represented at the meeting, making up more than 50% of attendees (Figure 1). An unprecedented number of travel fellowships were awarded, allowing many to travel from North America and Europe.

In 2008, the 6th ISSCR Annual Meeting was held in Philadelphia, PA, USA, with strong local support from the Institute for

“The ISSCR is recognized throughout Asia as the leading global stem cell research society, and its annual meeting always delivers the most exciting new findings from leading labs around the world.”

—Toshio Suda, MD, Professor, Keio University, Tokyo, Japan

Regenerative Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and the McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. With more than 2700 attendees and a record number of poster presentations, this meeting was the largest annual meeting to date.

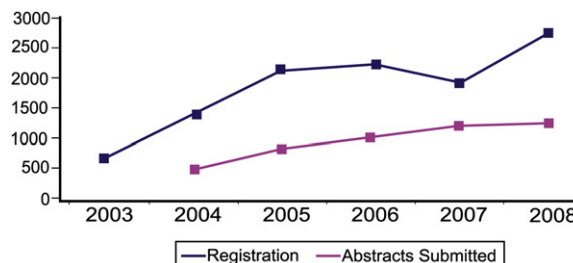


Figure 2. Growth of the ISSCR Annual Meeting

Attendance and abstract submissions has continued to grow since the first meeting in 2003. The 6th ISSCR Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, 2008, drew 2774 attendees, and 1340 abstracts were submitted.

Attendance

The 5th ISSCR Annual Meeting in Cairns, 2007, drew 1922 attendees, beating projections and packing lecture rooms. There were 2774 attendees at the 6th ISSCR Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, 2008, a record turnout. Scientists from 44 countries attended each meeting, with the distribution greatly influenced by local and regional attendance (Figure 1). As the meeting moves from one location to another, the tenor of the meeting reflects the diversity of different stem cell communities internationally.

Continued growth of the annual meeting has reflected the rise in membership, the increased excitement in the field of stem cell biology, and the continued development of the field (Figure 2).

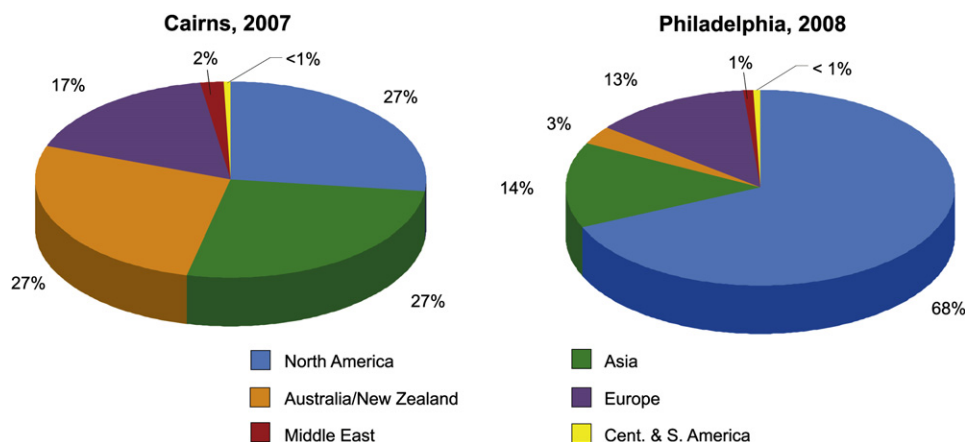


Figure 1. ISSCR Annual Meeting Attendance by Region

The 5th ISSCR Annual Meeting in Cairns, 2007, drew 1922 attendees; the 6th ISSCR Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, 2008, drew 2774. Scientists from 44 countries attended each meeting, with the distribution greatly influenced by local and regional attendance.

5th ISSCR Annual Meeting Supporters

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Australian Stem Cell Centre (ASCC)
 The 5th ISSCR Annual Meeting was supported in part by grants from Invest Australia.

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The Program

The Annual Meeting Program Committee determines the themes that define the individual meeting, incorporating into the program their collective vision of the field and balancing the plenary sessions and concurrent tracks to incorporate a broad spectrum of science. Each meeting has its own individual feel, drawing from the local environment and developing its own emphasis, with the common feature an excellent scientific program.

The program has continued to incorporate networking opportunities, with the ongoing success of the all-attendee mixer and junior investigator events. Topical panel discussions were incorporated into the program in the 2007 and 2008 meetings, and for the first time this year, an industry-developed seminar series, the Industry Wednesday Symposium, was offered directly preceding the meeting.

Speakers

The annual meetings offer more than 100 speakers in an array of plenary and concurrent sessions. Invited speakers are selected to elaborate the main topics of the meeting. Incorporated into the program are speakers selected from abstract submissions to showcase the latest science on these topics from around the world. The quality of abstracts received has been consistently high, and the selection of abstract speakers is the most difficult assignment the Program Committee faces each year. In Cairns, 2007, there were 50 invited speakers and 77 speakers selected from abstracts. This year in Philadelphia, there were 60 invited speakers and 49 speakers selected from abstracts.

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Posters

The poster sessions provide an important medium for scientific discussion between attendees. Each year, the number of abstracts submitted for presentation has continued to increase (Figure 2). The number of posters presented in Philadelphia, 2008 (1002 posters), was an increase of 11% from Cairns, 2007 (903 posters). Extra viewing time was allowed this year, with each poster on display for two days instead of one.

Support

Support of the annual meeting has continued to increase each year, allowing the meeting to expand with the field and offer new programs such as the panel discussions at each of the 2007 and 2008 meetings. Additional support in the form of cosponsorship from the Australian Stem Cell Centre contributed a further \$300,000 to the 5th ISSCR Annual Meeting in Cairns, 2007.

The ISSCR thanks all of its supporters over the past years, and in particular recognizes long-term supporters Amgen and the

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, who have supported all six ISSCR annual meetings, and Invitrogen Corp. and the Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research, who have been supporters for 5 years.

Exhibitors

The first ISSCR annual meeting in 2003 included 13 displays and has grown steadily in 6 years with the promise to grow still further in the coming years. The 2008 annual meeting in Philadelphia saw the greatest increase in exhibitor participation to date, with 151 booths presenting an astounding array of tools, services, and support. A record 133 companies came from Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, People's Republic of China, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Of these, more than 84% came from North America, and four have exhibited at the ISSCR for all 6 years: BioSpherix Ltd., Hamilton Thorne Biosciences Inc., Miltenyi Biotec GmbH, and R&D Systems Inc.

The ISSCR

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